

VIRTUAL MEETING – August 6, 2020
STATE & LOCAL ADVISORY TEAM (SLAT)
CHILDREN’S SERVICES ACT
1604 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 137
Richmond, VA 23229

Members Present: Lesley Abashian, SLAT Chair, CPMT – Local Government Representative; Shannon Updike, SLAT Vice-Chair, VCOPPA; Lisa Madron, CPMT – CSB Representative; Rebecca Vinroot, CPMT – LDSS Representative; Em Parente, DSS; Laura Reed, DMAS; Cristy Corbin, Parent Representative; Martha Carroll, CPMT – CSU Representative; Mills Jones, CSA Coordinators Network; Sabrina Gross, DOE; Linda McWilliams, DJJ; The Honorable Ashley Tunner, Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Representative; Angela Neely, CPMT – School Representative; Nina Marino, DBHDS

Members Absent: Jeannine Uzel, VDH

OCS Staff Members Present: Scott Reiner, Zandra Relaford, Marsha Mucha

Welcome/Opening

Lesley Abashian called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. She introduced herself as the new SLAT Chair and welcomed everyone to the call.

Mr. Reiner noted that the COVID-19 state of emergency precludes assembling the required number of individuals in a central location. He noted that, in accordance with virtual meeting requirements, the meeting was being recorded.

Attendance of SLAT members on the call was taken by roll call. Linda McWilliams was welcomed as the new primary SLAT representative for DJJ.

Public Comment Period

Two public comments were made concerning funding for private day schools during the current pandemic:

- Angela Lello, Senior Director of Public Policy, Autism Speaks
- Judith Ursitti, Director, State Government Affairs, Autism Speaks

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the June 4, 2020 meeting were approved on a motion by Mills Jones, seconded by Rebecca Vinroot and approved by roll call vote as follows: Rebecca Vinroot, Lisa Madron, Martha Carroll, Angela Neely, Lesley Abashian, Mills Jones, Ashley Tunner, Shannon Updike, Cristy Corbin, Em Parente, Sabrina Gross, Linda McWilliams and Laura Reed. Nina Marino was not available when the vote was taken.

SLAT Member Survey

Ms. Abashian reported that, as the new SLAT Chair, it would be beneficial to her to collect feedback about how SLAT meetings function through a short survey of the SLAT membership. She asked SLAT members to feel free to communicate with her regarding possible agenda issues to include on the SLAT agenda. This should include any state level issues/actions/decisions that could have an impact on CSA.

SEC Strategic Plan Workgroups Updates

- Core Leadership Competencies for Local CSA Leaders – Jessica Webb reported on behalf of the Workgroup. The Workgroup has met twice and has divided their work into three sub-workgroups: CSA coordinators, FAPT members, and CPMT members. They anticipate having deliverables available for the November SLAT meeting.
- Development of Guide for Youth and Families – Cristy Corbin reported on behalf of the Workgroup. She reported that the Workgroup met the end of June and is working on a survey to parents. The Workgroup has reviewed a previous survey conducted by the Virginia Family Network. They are also recruiting a family support partner to serve on the Workgroup.
- SEC Policy Review and Alignment – Scott Reiner reported that he is working on identifying members for the Workgroup. Of particular importance, is finding someone to serve/consult with the Workgroup on an equity-based focus/perspective to the policy review work.
- Implementation and Support of Outcome-Driven Practices – Scott Reiner reported that OCS is in the process of surveying state agencies concerning their collection and reporting of outcomes data.

SEC Provider Survey Update

Shannon Updike reported that, during discussion at the June SEC meeting, it was noted that it would be beneficial to survey the provider community to gain their perspective of the opportunities for collaboration and challenges experienced during the pandemic. She further reported, to date, approximately 100 responses have been received. The survey will close in mid-August with results presented to the SEC at their meeting in September.

Discussion: Impacts of Locality Educational Plans for fall 2020

Ms. Abashian asked SLAT members for updates and/or news on local educational plans for the beginning of the new school year as impacted by the pandemic. She stated that perhaps SLAT could be of assistance during this time, noting possible impacts to children and families linked to shift to 100% virtual education for the upcoming fall semester.

Sabrina Gross provided an update on activities and guidance from DOE and Angela Neely reported on school reopening plans for Culpeper County public schools. Remote learning concerns were discussed including access to remote learning; ensuring that students in remote learning continue to receive meals that would normally be provided at school; and modifications to IEPs based on changes in services and service delivery.

During discussion, it was noted that private schools must submit their reopening plans to DOE just as public schools are required to do. SLAT asked that Sabrina Gross check with her colleagues at DOE to ascertain how private schools are planning for the new school year. Toward the end of the discussion, members discussed resources and how their agencies and organizations are assisting families to ensure that children and families remain engaged, safe and healthy during this time. (Laura Reed will share the recent DMAS telehealth survey results with SLAT.)

OCS Report

- **OCS Guidance and Policy Updates** –
Protected Funds - Scott Reiner reported that the SEC (*September 2018*) had requested that SLAT review the use of non-mandated funds, including barriers to use of the funds, and best practices. At the December 2019 SEC meeting, SLAT presented the findings and recommendations of their study to the SEC.

One of the short term recommendations to the SEC was to re-brand the language used from “non-mandated” to “protected” funds and use consistent language in the CSA User Guild and Manual. He noted that those documents are being updated and that work should be completed by September 1, 2020.

SLAT also recommended development of specific training and informational materials for CSA audiences. Mr. Reiner noted that members had received with their meeting materials a copy of a draft FAQ on “Protected” State Pool Funding prepared by OCS Program Consultant, Carol Wilson. He asked that SLAT members review the draft and send feedback to him by the end of next week so the document can be finalized for the September SEC meeting.

The last short term recommendation concerns collecting local stories and best practices of maximizing community collaborative funds and resources and successful use of protected funding for publishing on the CSA website and/or for training purposes. Ms. Abashian and Mills Jones will follow-up on this recommendation with CSA coordinators.

- Guide to CSA and Special Education and Guide to Utilization Review - Mr. Reiner reported that, before Kristi Schabo, left the CSA office, she had developed a comprehensive guide to CSA and special education. This comprehensive guide will replace all of the existing CSA guidance on CSA and special education. Also, existing utilization review guidance for local CSA offices is being reviewed and updated. Both of these projects should be completed in the next 30 days or so.
- DBHDS Workgroup, SB 734 – Mr. Reiner reported that several names representing CSA/OCS (Julie Payne, Janet Bessmer and Mills Jones) have been submitted to serve on this Workgroup regarding access to residential psychiatric placements for children and adolescents.
- New CSA Coordinator Academy and CSA Annual Conference– Zandra Relaford reported that the virtual New CSA Coordinator Academy successfully concluded on July 31. When permissible, OCS will host an additional in-person training for new coordinators. The annual CSA Conference planned for this fall will move to a virtual platform and will be held on October 29 and 30. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Janice Underwood, the Commonwealth’s Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer. The Pre-Conference session for CSA Coordinators will be held on October 23 and focus on the topic of “Leading from the Middle”.

Member Updates

Ms. Abashian asked if individual SLAT members had specific time sensitive updates to share with members today. Nina Marino with DBHDS reported that Virginia was not selected as one of the states to receive the most recent round of SAMHSA grants. The current grant expires the end of September and DBHDS is looking at how they can sustain some of the services funded by that grant.

Em Parente from VDSS reported that the General Assembly would convene a special session on August 18 to consider the state’s budgetary issues. She wanted members to be aware of the Special Session and to share information about the Session with others as appropriate.

Because of time constraints, Ms. Abashian asked members to share other updates with her and she would compile them for distribution to the membership.

Adjournment: The virtual meeting adjourned by consensus at 11:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2020.